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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/683,532

01/16/2002

Victoria M.E. Bellotti

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06/18/2004

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EXAMINER

CHOUDHURY, AZIZUL Q

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2143

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DATE MAILED: 06/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/683,532

Applicant(s)

BELLOTTI ET AL.

Examiner

Azizul Choudhury

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 January 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 16 January 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

Detailed Action

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Sakaguchi et al (US Pat No: US006594636B1), hereafter referred to as Sakaguchi.

1. With regards to claims 1 and 10, Sakaguchi teaches a method for transmitting workflow-enabled electronic mail message from a user of a workflow system to a recipient, comprising: creating an email message to the recipient; determining a network address; embedding a link to the determined network address in the email message to the recipient; associating a process of the workflow system with the determined network address; and sending the email message having the link to the determined network address to the recipient (Sakaguchi teaches a email based workflow design. In the design, workflow definitions (definitions define the work to be flowed and include the claimed network address within them, hence workflow definitions are equivalent to the claimed network addresses) are chosen (determined) in one of a number of ways to best

suite the task at hand. In addition, since it is email based, the email must be created.

Since the workflow is sent as an email, the link as claimed must be embedded, this is done in the form of workflow definitions within Sakaguchi's design (column 2, line 16 – column 3, line 8, Sakaguchi)).

2. With regards to claims 2 and 11, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein determining the network address comprises selecting the network address from a list of predefined network addresses (Sakaguchi's design uses workflow definitions (equivalent to the claimed network addresses). These definitions are selectable from a list of predefined definitions (column 2, lines 50-63, Sakaguchi)).
3. With regards to claims 3 and 12, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein determining the network address comprises generating the network address (Sakaguchi's design uses workflow definitions (equivalent to the claimed network addresses). Sakaguchi's design allows these definitions to be generated as claimed (column 2, line 64 – column 3, line 3, Sakaguchi)).
4. With regards to claims 4 and 13, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein generating the network address comprises randomly or pseudo-randomly generating the network address (Sakaguchi's design uses workflow definitions (equivalent to the claimed network addresses). Sakaguchi's design allows these definitions to be generated without being the

same as previous ones (hence pseudo-randomly (since nothing in computing is truly randomly performed)) (column 2, line 64 – column 3, line 3, Sakaguchi)).

5. With regards to claims 5 and 14, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein generating the network address comprises generating the network address based on at least in part on information about at least one of at least the created email message, the recipient, the workflow process and the user (Sakaguchi's design allows definitions to be derived from one or more definitions (column 2, lines 42-50, Sakaguchi)).
6. With regards to claims 6 and 15, Sakaguchi teaches the method further comprising associating the determined network address with the email message (The claimed step of associating the network address (workflow definition) with the email message is inherent in Sakaguchi's design).
7. With regards to claims 7 and 16, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein associating the determined network address with the email message comprises associating an email address of the recipient to which the created email will be sent with the determined network address (The claimed step of associating the network address (workflow definition) with the email message and sending it with the email message is inherent in Sakaguchi's design).

8. With regards to claims 8, 17, 18 and 19, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein:
determining a network address comprises determining a plurality of different network addresses; and embedding a link to the determined network address into the email message to the recipient comprises embedding a plurality of links into the email message, each link being to one of the plurality of determined network addresses (As stated, Sakaguchi's design uses workflow definitions which hold the network addresses. If multiple network addresses are necessary in the workflow, these inherently must be present within the workflow definitions).
9. With regards to claims 9 and 20, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein associating a process of the workflow system with the determined network address comprises associating a different state of the associated process of the workflow system with each of the plurality of determined network addresses (Each of the claimed network addresses are known to be associated with different states of the workflow system. Each address links to a specific state of the workflow and a plurality of addresses link to a plurality of states of the workflow. Such features are inherent within email based workflow systems).
10. With regards to claim 21, Sakaguchi teaches a method for accessing a workflow process using a workflow-enabled email message, comprising: receiving the workflow-enabled email message that includes a link to a network address associated with the workflow process, wherein the network address is specific to the workflow process and to the email message; selecting the link to access the network address, wherein, in response, the

workflow system provides access to the workflow process (Sakaguchi's workflow system is email based and hence the workflow definitions (network addresses) are sent by email. Being such, the email messages must be received as claimed and the workflow definitions (network addresses) must be used to access the state of the workflow process in need of attention by the recipient. The claimed traits are inherent within email based workflow systems).

11. With regards to claim 22, Sakaguchi teaches the method further comprising: receiving a request to provide authentication from the workflow system in response to selecting the link; and providing the requested authentication to the workflow system, the workflow system denying access to the workflow process if the requested authentication is not valid (The workflow is only sent to the selected user and each user address is unique in the system ensuring authentication (since emails systems require sign-in procedures to access emails) (column 4, line 53 – column 5, line 8, Sakaguchi)).
12. With regards to claim 23, Sakaguchi teaches a method for providing access to a workflow process in response to receiving a network address that is associated with the workflow process, comprising: receiving the network address from a user; determining if the user from which the network address is received is a valid user of that network address; and providing access to the user to the workflow process only if user from which the network address is received is determined to be a valid user of that network address (Sakaguchi's workflow system is email based and hence the workflow definitions (network addresses)

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are sent by email. Being such, the email messages must be received as claimed and the workflow definitions (network addresses) must be used to access the state of the workflow process in need of attention by the recipient. The workflow is only sent to the selected user and each user address is unique in the system ensuring authentication (since emails systems require sign-in procedures to access emails) (column 4, line 53 – column 5, line 8, Sakaguchi)).

13. With regards to claim 24, Sakaguchi teaches the method wherein determining if the user from which the network address is received is a valid user of that network address comprises comparing an email address provided by the user to an email address associated with the network address for the user (Means by which to check Ids are present within Sakaguchi's design (column 4, line 53 – column 5, line 8, Sakaguchi)).


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Azizul Choudhury whose telephone number is 703-305-7209. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wiley can be reached on 703-308-5221. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AC



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